

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 17224 291816Z

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 17224

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, NATO

SUBJECT: EGON BAHR INTERVIEW IN LE POINT

BEGIN SUMMARY: FONOFF AND DEFMIN OFFICIALS AND, WE UNDERSTAND, FRENCH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE IRRITATED BY REMARKS MADE BY EGON BAHR DURING INTERVIEW PRINTED IN THIS WEEK'S LE POINT. THESE REMARKS RELATED TO GERMAN NEUTRALIZATION, THE FUTURE OF NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT, AN ALL-EUROPEAN SECURITY SYSTEM AND DETENTE WITH THE SOVIET UNION, SUBJECTS WHICH APPARENTLY ALSO CAME UP IN BAHR'S NOV. 19 TALK WITH JOBERT IN PARIS AND IN A LECTURE WHICH BAHR GAVE DURING HIS PARIS VISIT BEFORE A SMALL GROUP AT THE CENTER OF FOREIGN POLICY. BY PRE-ARRANGEMENT WITH EMBASSY PARIS, WE ARE REPORTING KEY EXCERPTS OF BAHR'S INTERVIEW AS REPRINTED IN THE NOV. 27 FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG. END SUMMARY.

1. BEGIN TEXT OF BAHR'S COMMENTS: I THINK THAT THE CONCEPT OF GERMAN AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN NEUTRALIZATION IS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 17224 291816Z

NONSENSE. THAT CANNOT BE REALIZED. IN ANY CASE, I HAVE

NEVER ADVOCATED SUCH A THESIS...(NOTWITHSTANDING OP-POSITION DISTORTIONS), EVERYONE IS AGAINST (NEUTRALIZATION), AND FIRST OF ALL WILLY BRANDT'S GOVERNMENT. THE REAL QUESTION BEFORE US IS WHETHER NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT WILL EXIST FOR ETERNITY. MY ANSWER IS NO. AND KONRAD ADENAUER WAS THE FIRST, IN 1960, TO SAY THIS BEFORE THE BUNDESTAG. IF ONE FORESEES THAT ONE DAY THE DIVISION OF EUROPE WILL BE OVERCOME, THEN ONE MUST HAVE THE COURAGE TO ADMIT THAT NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT AT THE MOMENT WILL CEASE TO EXIST. A SECURITY SYSTEM FOR ALL OF EUROPE WILL HAVE REPLACED (THE ALLIANCES). BUT THEIR DISAPPEARANCE CERTAINLY WILL NOT SIGNIFY NEUTRALITY. BECAUSE THIS EUROPE, NATURALLY, MUST DEFEND ITSELF...

2. IN REALITY, WHEN WE UNDERTOOK THE DETENTE POLICY, AND IT WAS FRANCE THAT INVENTED IT, IT WAS NOT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THAT THE PROBLEM OF TROOP REDUCTIONS WOULD COME TO THE FORE. WHAT IS MORE LOGICAL? NEVER HAVE SO MANY TROOPS AND SO MUCH MILITARY POTENTIAL BEEN CONCENTRATED IN THIS REGION, AND WHAT DOES "DETENTE" MEAN IF NOT THE EFFORT TO REDUCE THE ARMED FORCES OF BOTH CAMPS A LITTLE AND TO SEE WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE TO BASE SECURITY MORE ON RECONCILIATION THAN ON DETERRENCE. AND THIS PROCESS NATURALLY SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO THE TWO GERMAN STATES.

3. ...SAKHAROV IS RIGHT IF HE IS OPPOSED TO DETENTE ON THE BASIS OF UNILATERAL CONCESSIONS. (CONCESSIONS) MUST COME FROM BOTH SIDES. I AM SIMILARLY AGAINST UNILATERAL REDUCTIONS OF AMERICAN TROOPS. DETENTE DOES NOT MEAN BLIND TRUST. BOTH PARTIES MUST AT ALL COSTS MAINTAIN THE BALANCE OF THEIR FORCES. AND THIS BALANCE MUST AT ALL TIMES BE CONTROLLABLE. IT IS A VERY DIFFICULT THING.
END TEXT

4. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND THAT BAHR'S PERFORMANCE DURING HIS VISIT TO PARIS HAS CAUSED IRRITATION IN BOTH THE FRENCH AND GERMAN GOVERNMENTS. FONMIN SCHEEL IS REPORTEDLY ANNOYED THAT BAHR WAS AGAIN SEEKING TO PLAY THE ROLE OF "SECOND FOREIGN MINISTER." FONOFF AND DEFMIN
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PAGE 03 BONN 17224 291816Z

OFFICIALS ARE COMPLAINING ALSO ABOUT THE SUBSTANTIVE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY BAHR. IN FACT, WE HAVE BEEN STRUCK IN DISCUSSIONS WITH GERMAN CHANCELLERY, FONMIN AND DEFMIN OFFICIALS BY THEIR EFFORT TO DISSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM BOTH THE SUBSTANCE AND FORM OF BAHR'S REMARKS IN PARIS. IN PARTICULAR, OUR SOURCES HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT BAHR'S STATEMENTS IN LE POINT AND IN PARIS "DO NOT REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE FRG MANAGEMENT" ON PRESENT AND FUTURE

GERMAN SECURITY POLICY.
HILLENBRAND

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